

Proposed next steps for Acton 2020 website
29-Sep-2011
Jim Snyder-Grant

I propose that I work on implementing the following phases:

1. A new website ready in mid-October for the committee, consultants and staff to enter, edit, and comment on goals/objectives/strategies/action.
2. Link to this new site from our current site before the Nov 9 meeting, to allow the public to comment.
3. After November, integrate the two websites + continue the transformation of the website in to the online version of the Acton 2020 plan.

I have started prototyping Phase I using software called [Drupal](#), a highly-customizable website content-management system that would allow for the easy and usable entry, editing, linking, and commenting on our data.

What's the problem I'm trying to solve?

As we continue to link our data together, it is getting difficult to quickly navigate and make consistent the connections between our different strategies and action items. The constraints of tables are getting in our way, and the size of the data set makes it difficult to quickly look around and understand how things are connected, and it's difficult to maintain the consistency of the cross-connections.

For the later phases, we want to give the Acton community a chance to have the same ease of exploring and commenting on the plan, and Drupal is a flexible enough platform to give us all this.

What would be required?

I would need feedback from the committee on the overall idea and any specifics they had comments on, preferably at our next meeting.

I would need buy-in from the staff, consultants, and committee that they would use the website when it became available in mid-October. I think Phase I is only worth the effort if we use it for any further editing and refining of the implementation plan: we would need to move the data over and use the web site for further editing and stop using the current Word doc tables as a place to track the data.

I would need to make sure that at least one consultant would be available to test-drive the website when it was ready for testing, so that I could make changes before rolling it out to everyone else.

I would need to make sure we had an easy way to output the data for paper publication and for other electronic communication, and I will need to have some way to see all the data on one web page.

How would the Phase I website function?

We would have different sorts of web displays, backed up by a database, for the various 'levels' of the implementation plan: goals, objectives, strategies, and action items. And we would have other types of web pages that listed these various items in useful ways.

How would it work from a user point of view?

Anyone can browse the data, but if you follow some simple steps to create a username and password, you will be able to comment. A smaller set of "authorized" users would be able to hit 'edit' buttons that would change the page in to a form that could be edited just like other web forms.

The Goal pages would list the Objectives. Clicking on one of the Objectives would take you to a page for that Objective, that listed the main Strategies for that objective. and related strategies from other objective. Clicking on a Strategy would take you to a Strategy page that would list any Action Items, etc.

Strategy pages and Action pages would both list other related objectives, and would have back links to get you back to the higher-level items of which these are a part.

Strategy pages that did not have Actions, and all Action pages, would list the Responsible parties (main owners, and co-owners), the priorities, related objectives, and other items such as high/medium/low cost, if this required a new hire, what type of action this was, etc.

These in turn would also be links:

Responsible Party links would go to lists of action items owned or co-owned by that party.

Priority links would would go to lists of action items or strategies that had the same priority, etc.

And there would be back-links so that you get back to the goal for an objective, etc.

On the next page is a rough sketch of what might be on an action item page:

Action Item for Acton 2020

GOAL 3: [Improve Connections](#) / Objective 3.1: [Improve walking and biking.](#) / Strategy: [Build more sidewalks](#)

Update the Sidewalk Construction Priority List

Continue to update the Sidewalk Construction Priority List. Emphasize projects that provide access to schools, the train station, and the villages, particularly the designated growth centers.

[Any needed extra narrative on why and how this supports the objective would go in a paragraph here. In this case, none needed.]

[Any extra data footnoted in the original table would go here. In this case, none exist]

Timing: In Process	Owner and any co-owners
Priority: Medium	Sidewalk Committee
Cost: None	Objectives Also Supported by this Action
Hiring: None .	1.1 Manage growth proactively
Type Of Action: Planning	

Comment by: Celia Kent 10/15/2011 07:23 AM

Probably should add Objective 1.2: Preserve and enhance village centers

Add Comment:

--